



NEWS RELEASE

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64th Medical Detachment (Veterinary Services) conducts Mission Rehearsal Exercise to prepare for deployment

BAUMHOLDER, Germany – A deep blanket of white snow covers the trees of the Baumholder Training Area Dec. 7 as Soldiers of the 64th Medical Detachment (Veterinary Services) convoy in armored vehicles in a live fire exercise designed to prepare the unit for their deployment to Afghanistan in January.

The live fire was part of a larger training exercise for the unit.

“The mission rehearsal exercise is an excellent and valuable training event,” said Spc. T.J. Vallejos, a medic and command driver for the 421st Multifunctional Medical Battalion (MMB). “If tasked to go outside the wire, these Soldiers will have a basic idea of what to do and how to react,” said Vallejos.

The purpose of the MRE is to evaluate and certify the unit’s readiness and validate their ability to perform their war time mission.

Soldiers of the 64th Med. Det. (VS) not only exercised their critical tasks in clinical and tactical scenarios, they also performed Army warrior tasks such as convoy live fire operations and Improvised Explosive Device reaction scenarios.

“The culminating event was the convoy live fire exercise where the Soldiers engaged targets from the side of a snowy mountain, and fired into a rolling fog bank while the sounds of small arms and artillery fire were heard from the tree line” said Lt. Col. Jason Wieman, 421st Multifunctional Medical Battalion commander. “It was an outstanding exercise that stressed the capabilities of the 64th Med. Det. (VS) and the 421st MMB as a whole,” he said.

“This event was intended to test every task the detachment was likely to encounter during their upcoming deployment. It included multiple convoys, veterinary service missions, simulated public affairs interviews, and command post relocations” said Wieman.

The exercise was intended to be extremely demanding and the challenge of the frosty winter weather added significantly to the realism of the exercise.

“All of the protective clothing and equipment was extremely helpful to us in the cold winter weather conditions,” said Sgt. Ann Alexander, a veterinary food inspector and unit safety noncommissioned officer.

The mission of the 64th Med. Det. (VS) is to provide comprehensive veterinary service support to ensure food safety and defense, veterinary preventive medicine, supportive care to military working dogs, and public health support in a theater of operations.

The 64th Med. Det. (VS) returned from a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom just one year ago and while the demands placed on the Soldiers have been high, the Soldiers have continued to excel in the execution of their duties according to their commander.

“With re-deployment operations running straight into pre-deployment preparations and the huge turnover of personnel, this group of Soldiers was amazing in how quickly they came together with their skills and experience.” said Lt. Col. Tami Zalewski, 64th Med. Det. (VS) commander. “They are well prepared and I am proud to be a part of this unit” said Zalewski.

Story by Lt. Col. Carol Fontanese, 30th MEDCOM Public Affairs Officer. For more information please contact her at the email address or phone number listed above.